

ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

OF THE

Rural Sanitary District Council of the  
Plomesgate Union.

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GENTLEMEN,

I beg to submit to you my Seventeenth Annual Report upon the sanitary condition of the Rural District of Plomesgate.

**Births.** During the year 1897 there were registered 444 births, being 32 less than the number registered during the previous year, and giving a birth-rate of 23·4 per 1,000 inhabitants.

**Deaths.** The number of deaths registered during the past year was 266, being 9 less than the number occurring in the year 1896, and giving a death-rate of 14·07 per 1,000 inhabitants. The number of infants that died under one year of age was 42, equal to a death-rate of 94·5 per 1,000 registered births; this rate for the year 1896 was 107·3. Of the remaining 224 deaths, 127 were those of persons who had reached the age of 65 years.

**Zymotic Diseases** The number of deaths registered from the Zymotic Diseases was very small, being only 10, whilst there were 22 in the year 1896. Two were registered as being due to Diphtheria, two to Scarlet Fever, two to Enteric Fever, two to Whooping Cough, and one each to Diarrhoea and Erysipelas.

**Outbreaks of Infectious Disease during 1897.** During the year 1897 there were notified 109 cases of Infectious Disease, this number being 29 in excess of those notified during 1896.

The majority of the cases (70) were connected with the outbreaks of Diphtheria at Saxmundham (23), and Scarlet Fever at Friston (18), Benhall (18), and Saxmundham (11).

**Small-pox.** No case of Small-pox has occurred during the year 1897 within the district of Plomesgate.

**Scarlet Fever.** During the year 1897 there were notified 58 cases of Scarlet Fever, occurring in eight parishes, exceeding the number notified in 1896 by 23. Two deaths were due to this disease. The three parishes most affected were Friston (18), Benhall (18), and Saxmundham (11), whilst other cases occurred at Glemham Parva (4), Blaxhall (2), Earl Soham (1), and Framlingham (3).

The cases at Friston were a continuation of the outbreak of the previous year, and was conveyed to Benhall by a servant from the Chequers Inn, Friston; and I believe that the cases at Saxmundham arose from the same source. The four cases at Glemham Parva were associated with Diphtheria in the same family, caused, I believe, by the objectionable surroundings of the house. The two cases at Blaxhall most probably were infected from Friston, and of the three cases occurring at Framlingham, two were infected away from home, and in the third case I was unable to trace the source of infection.

**Diphtheria.** There were 35 cases of Diphtheria notified during the year, being one less than the number of cases occurring during 1896. These cases were distributed over 10 parishes, and in no case did the disease spread beyond the first house infected, with the exception of the outbreak at Saxmundham, which commenced at the beginning of October, and the disease continued to exist in the parish until the close of the year. In several cases the premises were found in a very favourable state for the development of Diphtheria, but I must think that the general system of drainage into the river, which, owing to the continued dry weather has been in a very objectionable condition, was the cause of this prolonged outbreak. One case of this disease was imported into each of the parishes of Ashe, Blaxhall, Kettleburgh, and Tunstall. In the last two named parishes a second case occurred in the same families.



A single case occurred in the parishes of Easton and Eyke, both of which, I believe, were caused by defects in the drainage. A case was notified from Orford, but I could assign no cause for the outbreak.

Two cases occurred at Glemham Parva (simultaneously with two cases of Scarlet Fever) both of which ended fatally, and I believe the outbreak was caused by the emptying of all refuse water upon high ground at the back of the house, which drained to the foundations and there left the soil in a sodden condition.

**Enteric Fever.** During the year 1897 there were 7 cases of Enteric Fever notified, of which two were fatal. They occurred in the parishes of Friston, Kenton, Easton, Framlingham and Wickham Market, and in only two instances was I able to ascertain any cause for the disease. The water supply to the one case at Wickham Market was polluted, and in one case at Framlingham the person affected was employed at the sewerage works.

**Erysipelas.** Eight cases of Erysipelas were notified during the year, occurring in six parishes, and from which disease two deaths were registered.

**Puerperal Fever.** During the past year only one case of Puerperal Fever has been notified.

**Whooping Cough** This disease was not at all prevalent in the district during the past year; one death, however, was registered as being due to it.

**Measles.** A few cases of Measles were under treatment at Wickham Market during the month of April, and also in Hacheston and Stratford St. Andrew, the schools in the latter two parishes being closed for two weeks in consequence.

**Mumps.** The schools at Framlingham were closed for two weeks in March owing to an epidemic of Mumps amongst the pupils.

**Influenza.** This disease has been very prevalent at times in many parts of the district, and often characterised by the severity of the symptoms. Five deaths were registered as being caused by this disease.

**Diarrhoea.** The district has been remarkably free from Diarrhoea during the past twelve months.

**Precautions taken to prevent Disease spreading.** I have visited every fresh outbreak of Infectious Disease as soon as possible, and have sent printed instructions by the next post after receiving a notification certificate, which would tend to prevent the disease spreading, drawing the attention of the heads of families to the necessity for isolation, the free use of disinfectants, care in the disposal of the excretions, and the removal of any collection of refuse. The drains and drinking water are examined, and the house and articles of clothing, &c., disinfected as thoroughly as possible.

**Water.** During the year 1897 the water supply of the district has been short, owing to the scarcity of rain, but the quality has been as good as in previous years. I have examined 43 samples, 12 of which I found to be unfit for drinking purposes. The water from the pump in Middle Street, Wickham Market, is still unused by those living in the neighbourhood for drinking purposes. A new public pump has been placed at the East entrance to Framlingham.

**Overcrowding.** During the year 1897 there was only one case of overcrowding brought under the notice of the Sanitary Authority, and this was at once abated.

I have visited during the year nearly all the slaughter-houses in the district, and found them all in a satisfactory condition.

I have also visited the common lodging houses at Framlingham and Saxmundham, and found them carried on in a cleanly and satisfactory manner.

Drainage schemes for the parish of Saxmundham are still under the consideration of the authorities.

The Sanitary Inspector's Report shows that 147 general nuisances have been abated, that 5 new wells have been sunk, that 13 new privies have been built and 8 repaired, and that one new drain has been laid and 11 repaired.

I append tables of Births, Deaths, and new cases of Infectious Diseases, classified according to age, locality, and disease.

I beg to remain, gentlemen,

Your obedient servant,

J. CORDY KEER,

*Medical Officer of Health to the Rural District  
Council of Plomesgate.*

FEBRUARY 18TH, 1898.



